

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS AND FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1-9, 11, and 13-15 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 9, 13, and 14 are independent. Claims 1 and 9 are hereby amended. Claims 10 and 12 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 13-15 are hereby added.

It is submitted that these claims, as originally presented, were in full compliance with the requirements 35 U.S.C. §112. No new matter has been introduced by this amendment. Support for this amendment is provided throughout the Specification. Changes to claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which the Applicants are entitled.

Claims 7-10 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 includes all the limitations of allowed claim 10. Therefore, claim 1 is believed to be patentable.

Claim 9 has been rewritten in independent form. Therefore, claim 9 is believed to be patentable.

Claim 12 was indicated to be allowable. Claim 12 was canceled previously, and therefore, Applicants added claim 13 which is identical to claim 12, which was indicated to be allowable. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 13 is allowable.

Claim 14 is allowed claim 7 rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, claim 14 is believed to be patentable.

II. DEPENDENT CLAIMS

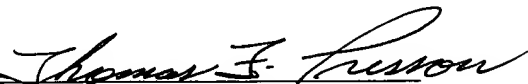
The other claims are each dependent from one of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for at least the above-identified reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicants respectfully request early passage to issue of the present application.

Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any
overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,
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